

REMARKS

The drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. 1.84(p)(5) because they do not include reference signs 74 internal lumen and 78 orifice mentioned in the description. Figs. 15a and 15b have been amended to insert reference signs 74 and 78 to overcome this objection. The drawings have been further amended to insert reference signs and to provide consistent reference signs when directing to the same part as follows:

1. In Fig. 33, reference signs 58 and 146 have been inserted. Reference sign 13 has been changed to 133.
2. In Fig. 35, reference sign 68 has been changed to 66.
3. In Fig. 37, reference sign 133 has been inserted.
4. In Fig. 39, reference sign 146 has been inserted.
5. In Fig. 40, reference sign 133 has been inserted.

The drawings are objected to under 37 C.F.R. §1.83(a) because they do not show a spine having a lumen which communicates with a guidewire lumen as claimed in claim 5. The specification is objected to because there is no support in the specification for a spine lumen to communicate with the guidewire lumen as claimed in claim 5. Claim 5 has been amended to overcome these objections.

Claims 2, 4 and 6 have been canceled.

New claims 7-10 are presented for prosecution.

Claims 1, 3, 5 and 7-10 remain pending in the application. Of these, claims 1, 3 and 5 are currently amended.

Claim 3 is objected to because of an informality. Claim 3 has been amended to overcome this objection.

Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. Claim 1 has been amended to overcome this objection.

Claims 1, 2 and 4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) based on Ressemann et al. U.S. 5,395,332 or 5,571,087 (the Ressemann patents), Fischell et al. U.S. 5,830,227 (Fischell '227), or Dunham U.S. 5,797,948 (Dunham '948). Claims 1-4 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) based on Edwards et al. U.S. 6,254,598 (Edwards '598) in view of the Ressemann patents, Fischell '227, or

Dunham '948. Claim 1 has been amended to overcome these rejections. The cited references do not teach or suggest a distal tip assembly having a proximal region for coupling to a basket assembly and a distal region coupled to the proximal region. As defined by the amended claim 1, the cited references do not teach or disclose, alone or in combination, a distal tip assembly projecting beyond the far end of a basket assembly and including a rigid proximal region adapted to engage at least one of first and second spines to maintain the first and second spines in a desired circumferential array and a distal less rigid region sized and configured for coupling to the proximal region and extending beyond the proximal region. In addition, the cited references do not teach or suggest a distal tip assembly that provides a gradient of decreasing stiffness from the proximal region to the distal region. Dependent claims 3, 5 and 7-10 further define the subject matter of sole independent claim 1 and therefore are also believed to be allowable over the cited references. Support for the claimed subject matter may be found in the specification as filed, e.g., at page 40, line 1 to page 42, line 8 and Figs. 37-40. No new matter has been added.

Reconsideration in view of the foregoing amendments and remarks and allowance of claims 1, 3, 5 and 7-10 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully Submitted,

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Enclosures: Amendment Transmittal Letter
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Replacement Drawing Sheets 21/42, 37/42, 38/42, 40/42, 41/42, and 42/42